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Low-income Workers and Entrepreneurs Achieving Economic Success

Mi Casa Resource Center has received a \$15,000 Good Neighbor Citizenship® grant from State Farm®, funding programs for disadvantaged workers and underserved entrepreneurs.

March 19, 2013 (DENVER): As part of a robust strategy of community involvement and service, State Farm supports Mi Casa Resource Center's adult self-sufficiency programs, including career training and small business development. State Farm recently awarded Mi Casa a grant for \$15,000 to support the costs of these programs that help low-income workers and entrepreneurs achieve lasting economic success through career path employment or business ownership.

"Mi Casa's partnership with State Farm is multifaceted and provides many benefits to our clients," says Christine Marquez-Hudson, CEO/Executive Director. "Grant funding is an important part of our sustainability strategy, and the involvement of State Farm employees in our training programs allows individuals in our programs to access information and advice that would otherwise be financially out of reach."

In addition to providing grant funding, State Farm employees support Mi Casa as volunteers. Agent Jessika Aerni serves as a guest speaker in Mi Casa's bilingual entrepreneurial training programs to help educate aspiring business owners about insurance requirements and considerations.

"We're incredibly proud to be working with this amazing organization," says State Farm Agent Jessika Aerni. "Mi Casa's programs are making a difference in our community, a difference that has an effect on all of us."

State Farm supports Mi Casa's entrepreneurial training and business counseling programs for underserved entrepreneurs, including women, Spanish-speakers and grassroots startups.

Gloria Duran received business training and counseling at Mi Casa, with the support of State Farm, and is now refurbishing a truck to take her catering business mobile, serving southwest Denver with authentic Mexican fare inspired by Gloria's home state of Veracruz.



Gloria immigrated to Colorado in 1997 after closing her business in Mexico and falling on hard financial times. She never gave up the dream of business ownership, though, as she worked for others at restaurants and bakeries for over a decade. When Gloria lost her job in 2008, she decided in order to find the financial stability she and her family needed, she would give business ownership another shot.

Gloria completed Mi Casa's entrepreneurial training course in Spanish and received one-on-one business counseling to write a business plan. Though Gloria had a great plan and strong experience in the food service industry, she

needed financing to launch. But with poor credit history and little collateral, she didn't qualify for a loan from traditional lenders.

Thanks to an aligned network of partners and strong collaborations, Mi Casa was able to connect Gloria with the Kiva Zip microfinance program, which uses crowd sourced funding to provide small loans to low-income entrepreneurs. Gloria's \$5,000 loan was funded and distributed in December 2012. Once her business is off the ground, Gloria will repay the 0% interest loan. She is now refurbishing her new truck (Gloria is pictured above with her old, mobile food trailer) and plans to begin operating by the end of March.

It is because of the support of corporate partners like State Farm that Mi Casa is able to provide entrepreneurs like Brenda with new opportunities for success.

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